

Tajuk : Malaysia shuttlers dominate

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KOTA SAMARAHAN: The Maybank Malaysia International Badminton Challenge which was held at Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (Unimas) concluded yesterday with Malaysian shuttlers nearly making a clean sweep in all of the categories contested.

All eyes were on top seed and former All-England champion Muhammad Hafiz Hashim in the men's singles.

The veteran shuttler was the only casualty for Malaysia as he was edged by Indonesian youngster Wisnu Yuli Prasetyo who is seeded ninth in the tournament.

It looks like all was going as planned for Hafiz when he won the first set 21-3 but Wisnu was determined not to go down without a fight when he won the second set 21-19. In the decider, the more energetic Wisnu proved that youth prevailed over experience when he won 21-18.

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Muhammad Hafiz Hashim, former All-England champion

a good day today as I was playing with a leg injury. Nevertheless he picked up in the second set and went on to win it as I had to slow down due to the pain on my right foot," said Hafiz after the match.

Fifth seed Teo Ee Ti and Goh V. Shem of Malaysia grabbed the men's doubles title when they defeated compatriot Shen Low Juan and Tan Jiun Yip 21-14, 21-12.

In the mixed doubles, Malaysians seventh seed Ong Jian Guo and Woon Wei Khed defeated Indonesian third seed Lukhi Apri Nugroho and Annisa Saufika 21-11, 21-14 to win the title.

Ong commented that he was satisfied with his game today after the match. His partner Woon in the other hand revealed they have

the better mental preparations.

"I personally think our opponents were too desperate to win today. Hence we manage to capitalise on their weaknesses," said Woon.

For this tournament, Ong and Woon trained under coach Jeremy Gan and the duo would be travelling to Hong Kong today (Nov 19) to compete in another tournament.

In the women's singles, second seed Lydia Cheah Li Ya lived up to expectations when she easily overpowered Singaporean seventh seed Liang Xiaoyu. It took the Malaysian only 31 minutes to

conclude the game as she won in straight set of 21-17, 21-12.

"Liang was a good opponent. Nevertheless I am glad to have won today," said Lydia after the match.

Lydia revealed that her next stop will be either Macau or South Korea. For now, she just wants to have a good time here in Kuching before going back to her native Kuala Lumpur.

In the women's doubles, Malaysian pair of Chow Mei Kuan and Lee Meng Yean was also victorious when they beat the Indonesian doubles combination of Ririn Amelia and Melvira Oklamona.

Chow and Lee won in straight set of 21-13 and 23-21.

Senior minister and minister of Social Development Tan Sri William Mawan Ikom was present during the prize giving ceremony. The tournament started last Tuesday (Nov 13).

PERHAPS NEXT YEAR: Mawan presents Hafiz his medal at the prize presentation ceremony. The top seed and former All-England champion lost in the final.

